

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for use with a network of computers including a database server and at least one computer running a network browser used by a system user to communicate with the server, the database including data to be assembled into different reports, the method for facilitating on-line report delivery to the browser and comprising the steps of:

providing a list of reports including a report subset of reports to be generated for the system user and a report time indicating when the report subset should be generated;

after the report time occurs:

10 notifying the system user that the report subset is ready for delivery;

retrieving the data required to generate the report subset

assembling each report in the report subset in a format where the information on the reports is placed in a printer friendly format such that the data is formatted to fit on a standard sized printer paper;

15 combining the report subset into a report construct; and

delivering the report construct to the browser via the network.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of combining includes compressing the report construct and wherein the step of delivering includes transmitting the compressed report construct to the network browser and converting the compressed report construct back into the printer friendly report construct.

3. The method of claim 2 also for use with a pulse sequencing program that is loadable onto the at least one computer, the program capable of downloading report constructs from the server wherein the step of transmitting includes the step of downloading the pulse sequencing program to the at least one computer and causing the program to retrieve the report construct.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the program is also capable of converting the compressed report construct back into the printer friendly report construct and wherein the step of converting includes causing the program to convert the compressed report construct back into the report construct.

5. The method of claim 2 further including the step of, after converting back to the printer friendly report construct, causing each of the list reports to be printed via a printer attached to the at least one computer.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the printer friendly report construct is the portable document format.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of notifying includes sending an electronic message to the fist user.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the step of notifying includes providing an indication via the browser that the reports are ready.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of notifying further includes the step of providing a delivery selector via the browser that is activatable to indicate that delivery should commence and wherein the method further includes monitoring the delivery selector for activation and delivering when the activator is activated.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein, after the step of converting and prior to the activator being activated the method further includes the step of storing the report construct on a database linked to the server.

11. The method of claim 8 wherein delivery includes the step of printing the reports on a printer attached to the at least one computer.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the steps of retrieving, assembling and converting occur prior to the step of notifying.

13. The method of claim 7 wherein the message is sent via e-mail.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of providing includes providing a list of possible reports that can be generated for the first system user and providing a report selector for selecting the sub-set of the possible reports and for selecting the report times at which the reports are to be generated, receiving the user selections and storing the selections as the report subset for the user.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the step of providing the list of possible reports and the report selector includes providing the list and the report selector via the browser.

16. A method for use with a network of computers including a database server, at least one computer running a network browser that is used by a system user to communicate with the server and at least one printer attached to the at least one computer, the method for facilitating on-line printing using the at least one printer and comprising the steps of:

for at least the system user, generating at least one printer friendly report where the information on the report is formatted to fit on a standard sized printer paper;

storing the at least one printer friendly report on the server;

10 providing a delivery selector via the browser that, when activated, indicates that the at least one report should be printed on the at least one printer;

monitoring for activation of the delivery selector; and

when the delivery selector is activated:

15 transmitting the at least one report from the server to the browser; and

causing the report the be printed on the first printer.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein the step of generating includes generating at least two reports and combining the reports into a record construct and wherein the step of transmitting includes transmitting the record construct to the browser.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the step of combining includes compressing the at least two reports together to form a transmission suitable record construct that is in a network transmission protocol and wherein the

- step of causing the report to be printed includes extracting the at least two
- 5 reports from the report construct and printing out each of the at least two reports in series.

19. The method of claim 16 wherein the step of generating includes generating at least two reports and wherein the step of providing includes providing a print selector via the browser for selecting at least a subset of the at least two reports, when the selector is activated, transmitting the subset of
- 5 reports and causing the subset of reports to be printed via the first printer.

20. A method for use with a network of computers including a database server and at least one network browser running on a first computer used by a first system user to communicate with the server, the network also including a first printer attached to the first computer, the database including data to be assembled into different reports, the method for facilitating on-line report delivery to the browser and comprising the steps of:
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receiving a report request including a report time for generating at least one report;

- 10 when the report time occurs, retrieving information required to assemble the at least one report;

assembling the at least one report in a printer friendly format;

transmitting the report to the browser; and

printing the report on the first printer.

21. An apparatus for use with a network of computers including a database server and at least one computer running a network browser used by a system user to communicate with the server, the database including data to be assembled into different reports, the apparatus for facilitating on-line report delivery to the browser and comprising:

means for providing a list of reports including a report subset of reports to be generated for the system user and a report time indicating when the report subset should be generated;

after the report time occurs:

means for notifying the system user that the report subset is ready for delivery;

means for retrieving the data required to generate the report subset

means for assembling each report in the report subset in a format where the information on the reports is placed in a printer friendly format such that the data is formatted to fit on a standard sized printer paper;

means for combining the report subset into a report construct; and

means for delivering the report construct to the browser via the network.

22. The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the means for providing includes means for providing a list of possible reports that can be generated for the first system user and means for providing a report selector for selecting the sub-set of the possible reports and for selecting the report times at which the reports are to be generated, means for receiving the user selections and means for storing the selections as the report subset for the user.

23. An apparatus for use with a network of computers including a database server, at least one computer running a network browser that is used by a system user to communicate with the server and at least one printer attached to the at least one computer, the apparatus for facilitating on-line printing using the at least one printer and comprising:

for at least the system user, means for generating at least one printer friendly report where the information on the report is formatted to fit on a standard sized printer paper;

means for storing the at least one printer friendly report on the server;

10 means for providing a delivery selector via the browser that, when activated, indicates that the at least one report should be printed on the at least one printer;

means for monitoring for activation of the delivery selector; and

when the delivery selector is activated:

15 means for transmitting the at least one report from the server to the browser; and

means for causing the report the be printed on the first printer.

24. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the step of generating includes generating at least two reports and wherein the step of providing includes providing a print selector via the browser for selecting at least a subset of the at least two reports, when the selector is activated, transmitting the subset of reports and causing the subset of reports to be printed via the first printer.